

PEQUOT TRAILS

PUBLISHED QUARTERLY IN THE SPRING, SUMMER, FALL AND WINTER BY THE PEQUOT-SEPOS WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, INC., MYSTIC, CONNECTICUT

Volume VI

Fall of 1954

Number three

Hurricanes Damage Trees

Damage to Sanctuary property was comparatively light as a result of hurricanes "Carol" and "Edna". A few large trees were lost and a good many topped or otherwise broken. Some trees are across trails and open areas regularly used by visitors. It will involve a lot of extra labor to have these trees removed and the areas cleaned.

One of the most noticeable and damaging effects of the two storms was the high loss of berries, nuts, and fruits that normally constitute a prolonged supply for our wildlife during the winter months. Virtually all the hickory nuts were blown from the trees prematurely and the fruits of the viburnums and similar shrubs covered the ground after the storms. Should such destruction be widespread it could have a damaging effect on wildlife populations, particularly if it is followed by severe winter weather conditions.

Recent Gifts to Sanctuary

We want to extend a very special thank you to Mr. and Mrs. Billings F. S. Crandall for their very fine gift of the three-volume set of the **New Britton & Brown Illustrated Flora**. This is a greatly appreciated addition to our library and one that should be most useful to students of the flora of our area.

From Dr. and Mrs. Roy W. Miner we received numerous books and periodicals including many complete bound editions of **Popular Science Monthly**. Also included was a complete first edition of **The American Naturalist** starting with Vol. 1—No. 1 in 1867. There were many issues of **Ecology**, **Horticulture**, **Animal Kingdom**, and many other fine natural history books and periodicals.

Two rustic and well designed wren boxes were the gift of Mr. Albert K. Bretherton. These boxes are to be put on sale in our Trading Post. For something different in wren boxes, you will want to see these.

Again, may we extend our appreciation to those members mentioned above and to all others who have helped us either materially or through the generous donation of their time and efforts.

Screen Tours Open Sunday, Nov. 21

Mamacoke Island Addition To Connecticut Arboretum

The Connecticut Arboretum Advisory Committee is pleased to announce that it has just negotiated a contract with Merritt-Chapman & Scott Corp. to purchase Mamacoke Island, a rocky hill situated in the Thames River just north of the New London city line. The Island is connected to the mainland by a strip of salt marsh.

Including the salt marsh, Mamacoke comprises about 40 acres. It was an old Indian campsite in precolonial times, and later was included as part of a grant made to Deane Winthrop, brother of John Winthrop. Deane never settled in Connecticut and left the land to New London. It was voted in town meeting in 1650 that the grant "be reserved for a convenient place to build a hospital." Later the grant was given to the Rev. Richard Blinman and eventually the land was sold to the Rogers family. John Rogers, founder of the Rogerines, lived on the grant (but not on the Island itself).

Mamacoke stands out in the Thames River valley as one of its most attractive features, and has long been a favorite spot for outings by foot and by boat. By acquiring the property for the Arboretum, this beautiful spot will be preserved in its natural state for the enjoyment of future generations. The slopes of the Island are wooded with large specimens of oak and hickory, and one of the largest dead chestnut trees in the County may be seen at the foot of the western cliffs. Several new habitats will be added to those already found in the Arboretum—salt marsh, alluvial river gravels, and extensive open ledges commanding fine views of the river.

The Advisory Committee has made a down payment of \$1,500 and has several months in which to raise an additional \$13,500 required to complete this purchase. The American Tree Association has already pledged \$2,000 towards this fund. It is hoped to raise the remainder partly through grants from other agencies and partly through gifts from individuals. Contributions are, of course, deductible for income tax purposes.

Fran William Hall To Present Matinee In Palmer Auditorium

The first program of the 1954-1955 Audubon Screen Tour series will be presented in Palmer Auditorium, Connecticut College, on Sunday afternoon, November 21, at three o'clock. Fran William Hall of Northfield, Minnesota, will present a motion picture lecture



FRAN WILLIAM HALL

program of Mexico titled "South to Siesta Land."

Mr. Hall is a master of nature photography. Since 1940, except for several years of technical work with the air force in the field of electronic engineering, he has been head of the Department of Photography at Carleton College. His lecturing under the auspices of the National Audubon Society has taken him to every state of the Union and most of the provinces of Canada.

Along the hot tropical-equatorial coastal plain of Mexico, and high in its cool mountain uplands, birds, insects, animals, and the shy, proud native Indians live their lives in a world apart from the modern cities and fine hotels familiar to most visitors. From out-of-the-way villages, countryside and wilderness, Fran William Hall has brought back a color film of these less-

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Our Sanctuary Today

An Analysis by the Curator

I hope that you will take a few moments of your time to read this analysis through in its entirety. I wish that every one of our more than 600 members might do so, for I feel the time has come when we should make a fair appraisal of our organization. I think you will find it both informative and challenging and a few moments well spent.

Nearly ten years ago a group of representative citizens from the communities in this area met for the purpose of considering the first steps in organizing a community wildlife sanctuary. This was not a spontaneous meeting. It was results of the tremendous interest in the germ of an idea first initiated by the Mystic Garden Club. Here assembled, for the purpose of establishing a new organization that would greatly benefit the citizens of our area, were representatives of Stonington, Mystic, New London, North Stonington, Westerly, and smaller surrounding communities. It was in this meeting, and in subsequent ones, that the basic structure of your Sanctuary was formulated.

The plans presented by this group were so enthusiastically received that approximately 300 Founders and Charter Members comprised the initial membership roster. A Board of Trustees was elected being representative of the communities involved. Officers were elected from among their number and a Curator was appointed. This personnel assumed obligations and responsibilities to the membership and to the communities in seeing that the organization functioned as intended. These obligations and responsibilities have in no way lessened. Without a doubt, they have taken on new meaning, for periodically during the past ten years it was found advisable to adopt changes in our By-Laws in order to rightfully assume the responsibilities of a greatly expanded program.

Program Has Changed

To what extent have we met these obligations and responsibilities? This is a fair question and one that I shall do my best to answer for you. The program that we have been conducting these past few years has, through necessity, changed and expanded from the program as originally conceived. Had we not adopted a liberal interpretation of the By-Laws, today we would be little more than a bird sanctuary with a few ardent admirers. Rather, we are a recognized community organization that has gained the respect and support of our citizens. In the broader sense, we have gained recognition nationally as a unique community endeavor in the cause of conservation education. We are not just a "bird sanctuary" nor just an "organization" of any kind. We are a program—a pro-

gram that symbolizes what is right in understanding nature, and in the wise use and restoration of our natural resources.

Our program has been one of many facets but with a singular purpose. School classes, motion pictures, lectures, etc., bring immediate and recognizable results. Other facets, such as property improvement, are equally important but the results must be measured over a considerably longer period of time. It is easy for the visitor who has come to "see the animals" to pass over the Sanctuary's land without noticing the planting of such items as young dogwoods, highbush cranberry, Amur River privet, and evergreen seedlings. Yet, without any allocation in our budget for such items, our plantings have numbered well into the hundreds. It has always been our desire to establish the Sanctuary as a vast demonstration area wherein visitors may see the answers to many conservation problems. We have been moderately successful in this respect, but we must concentrate more of our effort toward this end. If we can show the interested visitor how to improve his own woodlot, what trees and shrubs to plant to attract wildlife, how to prevent erosion, what type of box to put up for bluebirds or martins, how to use selective cutting as a land improvement project, how to construct ponds for water control, and many similar conservation measures, we will then be multiplying the effectiveness of our program many fold.

During these past nine years thousands of children and adults have heard me present, in one form or another, a variety of nature and conservation programs. Motion pictures, slides, lectures, chalk talks, flannel board demonstrations, live exhibits, and similar devices have all been a part of my personal presentations. Mainly through the Audubon Screen Tour programs, some of our country's outstanding wildlife lecturers have been presented to large community audiences. This, in brief, has been our in-the-field program. It has been well received as attested by the community support given our Sanctuary. This, also, is the program that we are continuing to offer. Is it enough? I think not, for an organization such as ours must either grow or die. Let us hope we continue to grow.

More Personnel Needed

The next question that arises in natural sequence is, "what must we do to continue growing?" I, alone, do not want to answer this question. I would rather see a comparatively large representative group of our members find the answer. What do you as members want in the way of a program? What more should we be offering our community? How can we do it? These, and many other questions, can best be answered by members who are enthusiastically interested in the future of their

own organization. To me the immediate problem is getting more people to do more things. Surely, members will be glad to help plan their own activities. For instance, I know there is a demand for an enthusiastic nucleus of birders who will supplement our program by planning and arranging field trips, outings, and evening activities. We must find a group who are equally anxious to improve the Sanctuary property by planting, cutting, the building of ponds, and similar projects. Also, we need more members who are willing to help with less glamorous activities as membership promotion and fund raising. In summation, it would seem that our need is for active committees that would assume the initial responsibility for these improvements. These committees would have to be appointed at the beginning of each fiscal year so that their planning might be effective before the year is past. I hope, that by the time this reaches print, endeavors will be under way to enlist people to the needs mentioned above.

Without a doubt, we have been lax in utilizing the talents of our members. The cause of this may be a bit difficult to pin point. Perhaps, as your Curator, I have been too much of a hired man and not enough of a personnel manager. This immediately brings up another thought that I would like to share with you. I think you will be interested. You must wonder what activities fill my day. What does our Curator do? As the day dawns it is not always easy to decide whether to mow the lawn, clear the trails, print trail signs, stay nearby the Trailside Museum to welcome visitors and tend the Trading Post, write a news article, prepare a lecture for my evening's schedule, enter membership renewals, catch up on correspondence, work on the quarterly bulletin, weed the nursery, clear around shrub plantings and desirable trees, clean the picnic area, build an exhibit for the Trailside Museum, sharpen the lawn mower, clean the office, go to the printers, work on the layout for a new folder or stationery, or hold a one man funeral for Mrs. Doe's deceased pet sparrow!

The activities mentioned above will give you some idea of the versatility required in keeping our organization live and functioning. Perhaps, too, you can better picture the magnitude of the job developing and maintaining our 125 acres as a sanctuary and the task of creating and presenting a community program acceptable to children and adults. Surely it points out how advantageously we could use additional help in promoting many of these endeavors to the degree that we would like to.

Property Development Urgent

This puts the next item that I would like to discuss with you in a rather natural sequence. I feel that it is a very important item and the most urgent one facing the Sanctuary today—one

that demands immediate attention. We must make some major efforts to develop our property as a sanctuary, otherwise, it will be little more attractive than any of our neighbors 125 acres. People come to the Sanctuary looking for a "show." This "show" should be in the form of demonstration areas, exhibits, plantings, etc., that help promote a better understanding of nature and the wise use of our natural resources. Some of the specific things we should be doing to accomplish this include: Improve the parking area by eliminating the wall between the two approaches to the road and by erecting a large rustic sign there telling people that **this is the Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary**. The parking area should be sprayed to keep grass from taking over. The borders should be landscaped and planted with a mixed hedge or border planting that would be attractive to wildlife and also serve as a safety barrier.

We need to do some extensive cutting in certain areas so that we do not end up with a single type of terrain. We have more than enough wooded areas so we must maintain what open areas we do have. More emphasis must be put on the management and promotion of the values of our forestry demonstration area. There are 3 or 4 additional water areas in the Sanctuary that should be developed as breeding and feeding areas for waterfowl. Many trails need clearing and widening. The entire area around the buildings needs to be landscaped. We need some real wildlife plantings on a scale large enough to be of some value. We can do this only through some provision in the budget. Our planting program has been based on "give away" items too long. The results to date are negligible.

Our Trailside Museum must be more than a "one man show" sandwiched in among a lot of other activities. Here we need interested personnel that will assume some of the long tedious hours of labor so necessary in developing any museum exhibit. Our Nature Trail must be extended and present a more complete ecological story.

These are just a few of the activities that would improve our property immensely. I am convinced that once we make our property look like a sanctuary and have a good conservation "show," we will have a greatly increased interest in our work. We will attract many more visitors many of whom will become interested in our work and membership. Through them we will find our continued growth and support.

This, simply stated, is our Sanctuary as I see it today. I hope that what I have written here is not looked upon with any degree of discouragement. It is presented solely for the purpose of helping you better understand the organization to which you belong and

support. If it presents a challenge to you to expand your interest in our endeavors, all that is written here will have more than accomplished its purpose. Ours is an organization of which we should all be proud, for efforts and investments in behalf of conservation today will pay dividends for all time to come.

Thomas P. McElroy, Jr.
Curator

Become a Screen Tour Patron

We urge you to become a Screen Tour Patron—not because of the two season tickets you will receive—but as your contribution towards making it possible for these two organizations to bring these educational programs to our community.

Audubon Screen Tour Tickets

| | |
|--|---------|
| Screen Tour Patron (includes 2 season tickets) | \$10.00 |
| Sanctuary or Arboretum Member's Season Ticket | \$ 4.00 |
| (Members purchasing 2 or more season tickets will be listed as patrons.) | |
| Non-Member's Season Ticket | \$ 5.00 |
| Adult's Single Admission Ticket | \$ 1.20 |
| Student's Single Admission Ticket | \$.60 |

Order tickets from
Pequot-sepos Wildlife Sanctuary
Mystic, Connecticut

Screen Tour Schedule

FRAN WILLIAM HALL

"South to Siesta Land"

Sunday, November 21, 3:00 p.m.

TOM and ARLENE HADLEY

"Into the North Woods"

Monday, January 17, 8:00 p.m.

GEORGE REGENSBURG

"Little Known New Jersey"

Sunday, February 13, 3:00 p.m.

ALFRED M. BAILEY

"Cajun Country"

Sunday, March 6, 3:00 p.m.

G. HARRISON ORIAN

"Great Smoky Skyland"

Wednesday, April 13, 8:00 p.m.

IN THE SANDS OF TIME

... Probing for food along the beach these shorebirds (curlews and willets, judging from their silhouetted shape and size) demonstrate Nature's amazing adaptations, as in this case the long strong bills used to penetrate the sand and mud in search of tiny crustacea and other choice tidbits. Audubon Screen Tours are color motion picture programs on the out-of-doors, entertaining and educational at the same time.

Screen Tours

(Continued from Page One)

er-known places. He and his wife visited areas isolated from the rest of Mexico, some of them not connected by road until recently.

Primitive and friendly Indians showed the Halls their ancient methods of pottery-making; led them to haunts of native birds; and guided them to ruins of an ancient and once beautiful city on a mountain top.

Many forms of Mexican wildlife are shown in vivid natural color as active participants in this tour of the "land of eternal spring."

Book Reviews

THOSE OF THE FOREST

by Wallace Byron Grange

314 pages. Illustrated with thumbnail sketches by Olaus J. Murie. Published by the Flambeau Publishing Company, Babcock, Wisconsin; 1953. Price \$4.75.

From the lee side of a sheltering spruce on a snow-riven night, through the succeeding seasons, and through the varying hare, Snowshoe, and his son, Lepus, the reader is drawn deftly into **THOSE OF THE FOREST**. The snowshoe rabbits, unquestionably the main characters of this narrative, are actually the *modus operandi* for a delightful and revealing story of forest animals.

Although the term ecology is not mentioned in the text, the book is a popularly written ecological record of the responses of animals to their physical and biological environment. It expresses the basic and unavoidable dependence of all animals on each other and on their surroundings.

Scientifically grounded and based on a lifetime of personal experience and observation by the author, **THOSE OF THE FOREST** is one of the best popularized accounts of the lives of native North American animals published. Its style, like its subjects, is vivid and dynamic. This book should be a great favorite with all persons whose innate curiosity is aroused by the workings of nature.



Congressional Notes

The 83rd Congress adjourned August 20, 1954. In soil conservation and watershed management the record of this Congress is distinguished. In other areas of natural resources administration there was little constructive legislation of major importance although conservation-minded members of the House and Senate can point to significant if negative victories.

It was a busy Congress, as the newspaper summaries totting up the laws have indicated. Members of the House introduced more than 11,000 bills and resolutions; Senators, more than 4,000. Some thousands of these would have affected the natural resources and public lands of the nation, directly or indirectly. Hundreds become law, most of them of a minor nature although a few, such as the new Atomic Energy Act and the "tidelands" oil act, are of far-reaching importance.

Flood Prevention in the Watersheds

Conservationists have long contended that the historic flood control programs of the Federal government were going at the problem wrong-end-to. They treated the symptoms rather than the cause, spending vast sums for big dams and levees on the lower streams, trying to contain the overflows after the floods became a fact. They ignored the uplands—the farms, rangelands and forests—where floods commence and where man's treatment of the land has increased water runoff and soil erosion.

The 83rd Congress started the process of straightening out this flood control business. It appropriated \$5 million last year to the Soil Conservation Service for a "pilot plant" program designed to show on small watersheds throughout the country how proper land management and run-off-control can prevent floods as well as save soil and increase farm production. It voted \$7,250,000 this year to continue the work during fiscal year 1955. Then it passed the Hope-Aiken Watershed Protection and Flood Prevention Act, now designated as Public Law 566, 83rd Congress. The Hope-Aiken law provides for federal cooperation with the states and local districts in small-watershed conservation programs. Federal participation will include both funds and technical services.

Another important boost for soil conservation was a change in the income tax laws that permits farmers to deduct the cost of soil and water conservation improvements, up to 25 per cent of their gross income. The expense deductions may be made, according to the new law, for "the treatment or moving of earth, including (but not limited to) leveling, grading and terracing, contour farming, the construction, control and protection of diversion channels, drainage ditches, earth-

en dams, watercourses, outlets, and ponds, the eradication of brush, and the planting of windbreaks."

Holding the Line for Conservation

The first session (1953) saw the stockmen's grazing bill (H. R. 4023 and S. 1491) crushed in committee. This attempted raid was aimed at crippling National Forest administration and giving a minority group of livestock operators a vested interest in the forest rangelands.

Echo Park Fight Defeats Upper Colorado Project

Finally, in the second session, a powerful drive for authorization of the Upper Colorado Storage Project, including Echo Park dam in the heart of Dinosaur National Monument, was blunted and stalled. Public opposition, spearheaded by a phalanx of national conservation organizations, centered its fire on the proposed invasion of the national park system. There were serious economic arguments against the whole project and the issue was complicated by conflicting interests in the Upper Basin and Lower Basin states, but organized conservationists opposed only the one dam, Echo Park, and urged Reclamation engineers to plan for the necessary water storage at other sites.

Things You May Not Know

"Not enough to keep a bird alive" is a misleading statement concerning diet. Many birds consume half their weight in food each day, while young birds frequently eat more than their weight a day.

* * *

The largest reptile in modern times is the leatherback, a marine turtle. Specimens have weighed almost 1,500 pounds and measured eight feet in length.

* * *

While the owl cannot move its eyes in their sockets, it does have a great area of vision because it can rotate its head in a large arc of 273 degrees.

* * *

There are 75 species of North American violets found in this country.

* * *

The trumpeter swan, with a maximum weight of 40 pounds, is the heaviest flying bird in North America.

* * *

The mackerel has a different swimming apparatus than other fish. It has no air bladder to give it buoyancy, but strong muscles along its spinal column enable it to tuck its fins in close to the body for maximum swimming efficiency.

Audubon Philosophy

The National Audubon Society has recently been publicizing a statement of philosophy that is excellent. Everyone interested in the out-of-doors and the conservation of our natural resources will want to read, know, understand, and believe in this philosophy. Once you read it, we think you will agree. This beautifully illustrated statement can be purchased from the Society at 1130 Fifth Ave., N. Y. Size is 13 x 17½ inches; price, 25c each, 2 or more 20c each.

A Statement of Audubon Philosophy
We believe in the wisdom of nature's design.

We know that soil, water, plants, and wild creatures depend upon each other and are vital to human life.

We recognize that each living thing links to many others in the chain of nature.

We believe that persistent research into the intricate patterns of outdoor life will help to assure wise use of earth's abundance.

We condemn no wild creature and work to assure that no living species shall be lost.

We believe that every generation should be able to experience spiritual and physical refreshment in places where primitive nature is undisturbed.

So we will be vigilant to protect wilderness areas, refuges, and parks, and to encourage good use of nature's storehouse of resources.

We dedicate ourselves to the pleasant task of opening the eyes of young and old that all may come to enjoy the beauty of the outdoor world, and to share in conserving its wonders forever.

VISIT OUR TRADING POST

— for —

Wild Bird Feed—our own
special mixture
Bird Feeders
Suet Cakes and Cups
Stationery Items
Audubon Bird Calls
Bird Boxes
Peterson's Field Guide
(autographed copies)
Party Matches
Bridge Prizes
Christmas Gifts

A Statement of Purpose: We want this publication to be of the utmost service to you—to keep you informed concerning activities at the Sanctuary and in your community; to invite your participation in these activities; and to provide you with general articles of education and inspiration regarding conservation subjects. Won't you drop us a line and tell us what you would like to see published? We would appreciate it.